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FOREWORD

A major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate inservice growth and school improvement. Consequently, requirements include not only meeting the standards of the Utah State Office of Education, but also completing a school evaluation every six years.

School evaluation is that effort by the local school staff to take a comprehensive look at the school's program, operation, and effect. The school determines how closely its purposes and philosophy coincide with its actual practices and the degree to which its stated objectives are being reached. It is a three-phased program: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, February 10 and 11, 2003 was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to meet the requirements referred to above.

The entire staff of Layton High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the Visiting Team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Paul Smith is commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for the generally fine program being provided for Layton High School students, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more adequately meet the needs of the students of Layton High School.

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Dale Barnett.....	Supervisor, Elementary Education
Pam Tsakalos.....	Supervisor, School Lunch

LAYTON HIGH SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Paul C. Smith.....	Principal
Dee L. Burton.....	Assistant Principal
Myrna Mayes.....	Assistant Principal
Muriel Mann.....	Assistant Principal

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Allyne Hall.....	Counselor
Bonnie Novak.....	Counselor
Sandy Rich.....	Counselor
Suzanne Thompson.....	Counselor
Sharlene Weight.....	Counselor
Nancy Wood.....	Counselor

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Melanie Nelson	Andrea Swanson	Chris Waite
Leta Sharp	Rick Talamantez	Buck Walker
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Sharon Bair	Sherri Hawkes	Terry Meibos
Shirlee Randall	Ilene Crowell	Kayla Hamilton
Judy Hales	Shelly Ihler	Carrie Barson
Pam Nielson	Herb Patrick	Valerie Burke
Patty Dickson	John Lyons	Connie Collins
Jared Criddle	Lynn Child	Delphina DeSantis
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Wendy Orme	Larry Higgs	Consuelo Elder
Terry Rawley	Jake Garcia	Karen Price
Camille Cook	Jeanette Peck	Inez Quinonez
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Jeri Wettstein
Allyson White
Robert Wilcox
Lynette Wilkes
Joann Wiseman
Lark Woodbury

LAYTON HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

At Layton High School, we believe that learning can best be achieved when students are:

- Provided a place where everyone feels secure
- Respected as individuals
- Given an opportunity to grow and achieve a measure of success everyday

BELIEF STATEMENTS

At Layton High School, we believe:

1. Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs.
2. A safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning.
3. Students learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process.
4. Students need to not only demonstrate their knowledge and skills, but also need to be actively involved in solving problems and producing quality work.
5. The commitment to continuous improvement is imperative if our school is going to enable students to become confident, self-directed, life-long learners.
6. Student learning is the chief priority for the school.

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Roy Hoyt, co-chair, Hurricane High School, Washington School District

Joyce Gray, co-chair, West High School, Salt Lake City School District

Rachel Harris, Olympus High School, Granite School District

Georgia Loutensock, Utah State Office of Education

Brooke Noall, East High School, Salt Lake City School District

Ashley Shaw, Olympus High School, Granite School District

Ken Spurlock, Alta High School, Jordan School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

LAYTON HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

The profile of Layton High School is a study of the school's role in the community and programs offered by the school, and includes a wide range of data.

a) *What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of their profile?*

Layton High School is located in Layton, Utah with an enrollment of 1,805 students, as of October 1, 2002, in grades 10 through 12. Layton High is one of two high schools in Layton City and one of seven high schools in Davis School District. Layton is a city of approximately 62,000 residents nestled between the Wasatch Mountains on the east and the Great Salt Lake on the west.

Seventy-seven full-time and five part-time faculty members serve Layton High, with three administrators, one administrative intern, one applied technology coordinator, five counselors, a library media coordinator, a computer specialist, six secretaries, one facility manager and four full- and part-time custodians, along with sixteen teacher aides. The school is unique in its administration in that there have been only two principals since its beginning.

The school year consists of two semesters, each with 90 days. Students are registered for eight periods, attending four-period blocks on alternating school days. All classes are approximately ninety minutes in duration. Candidates for graduation must earn 27 credits, including required classes. Students must also have 35 citizenship credits.

The student body remains fairly stable, which is exemplified in the housing breakdown of the community. The community consists of 75 percent single-family housing, 17 percent multiple-family housing, and 7 percent mobile homes. Stability and consistency are reflected by these percentages. Layton High School has a mobility rate of approximately 15 percent, with most of the transfers and withdrawals coming from students living in apartments and mobile homes.

The school is very divergent in its social structure, serving both students who are considered to be at a high socioeconomic level and those that are at, or near, the poverty level. An average of 9 percent of the student body qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch. Few students are bussed compared to adjoining high schools. Currently there are only 10 buses that bring students to the high school each day.

- b) *What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*

Layton High School should continue its efforts to systematically collect and analyze pertinent student data to guide decisions made by the school and departments within the school. This effort should broaden to include disaggregating and examining both state and national norm-referenced test data and criterion-referenced test data by gender, grade level, income, ethnicity, etc.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- Enlarge and desegregate the data, including attendance patterns and disciplinary referrals, actions, etc.
- Collect more information on students and parents surveyed (e.g., how many were surveyed, how they were selected, etc.).
- Extend the use and analysis of data to guide the decision-making process.

CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

The Layton High School leadership team and administration have made an effort to involve stakeholders through the process of self-analysis. The process was facilitated by one of the assistant principals and one teacher, along with an eleven-member leadership team consisting of teachers and administration. The leadership team facilitated the process of refining the mission and belief statements, departmental analyses, focus groups, and the development of an action plan.

It is evident that the stakeholders at Layton High School made a concerted effort as part of the self-analysis. However, the process of “Collaboration for Student Achievement” was not fully achieved. From interviews with parents, students, and staff members, it is evident that many of the stakeholders’ perceptions are still unclear regarding the purpose of the process, as well as how the action plan will determine the direction of the school in the future. More effort needs to be put forth to ensure that stakeholders are aware of and support the school improvement plan.

The Visiting Team recognizes that the school and leadership team have made a sincere effort to do a systematic analysis of the school's strengths and limitations, and commends them for this effort.

- b) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The self-study focuses on the analysis of the organization's effectiveness based on the NSSE Survey of Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness. The Visiting Team believes the self-study mostly reflects the school's current strengths and limitations.

Many of the school's strengths were clearly identified in the report. Additionally, the staff's high level of collegiality, passion for students, and willingness to engage in professional development opportunities were evident. As the school becomes more knowledgeable about using the self-study process to accurately identify student achievement gaps, examine best practices, and reflect on organizational practice, they will become more successful at identifying both their strengths and limitations.

CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Layton High School's Desired Results for Student Learning (DRSLs) are as follows:

Skills

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| ➤ Reading | ➤ Writing |
| ➤ Speaking | ➤ Listening |
| ➤ Use of Technology | ➤ Communication |

Indicators:

- ❑ Students will demonstrate improvement in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills through a variety of assessment measures.
- ❑ Students will develop and integrate a variety of communication methods (verbal, written, artistic, graphic, and mathematical) to demonstrate their learning.
- ❑ Students will demonstrate proficiency in the use of technology in appropriate contexts to support learning.
- ❑ Students, teachers, and parents will establish and maintain open and positive communication.

Knowledge

- Transfer of Knowledge
- Intellectual Curiosity
- Career Preparation
- Post Secondary Preparation

Indicators:

- ❑ Students will gather, classify, organize and use information to transfer knowledge into career preparation and useable skills for life-long learning.
- ❑ Students will organize, classify and investigate information to enhance intellectual curiosity.
- ❑ Students will complete an annual SEOP that will, in turn, drive their selection of courses.
- ❑ Students will be given an opportunity for work-based learning experiences.

Attitude

- Healthy Life Choices
- Accountability
- Work Cooperatively
- Ethical Behavior

Indicators:

- ❑ Students will have the opportunity to choose healthy life-styles through curriculum taught in various content areas.
- ❑ Students and teachers will demonstrate teamwork in cooperative learning environments.
- ❑ Students, teachers and parents will be informed of LHS policies and procedures.
- ❑ Students will be held accountable for their academic and attendance decisions.

Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

Evidence is present to indicate that Layton High School utilized a consensus-building process that involved teachers and administrators in defining the school's beliefs, mission, and goals. The process also provided a limited role for other stakeholders such as students, parents, and community members. Recommendations and suggestions from members of the school community were gathered and taken into account in defining the beliefs and mission of the school. The school has collaboratively revised its mission statement, which is intended to give direction to all academic endeavors and is the source from which the school's beliefs and desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are derived.

The school's mission statement is very visible throughout the school, in hallways and every classroom.

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

The school's belief statements address some of the key issues pertinent to decision-making and policy development.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

The mission, beliefs, and goals are commendable. However, the mission statement does not fully define the purpose or the direction of the school. The desired results for student learning do not align with the action plan or reflect the departmental objectives. The goals and action plans are general; while some of the goals are challenging, they are not measurable. The Visiting Team recommends that the scope of school improvement efforts be narrowed in order to focus on one or two areas of the DRSLs to ensure overall student success.

Curriculum Development:

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure that the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

The Visiting Team noted that 21 faculty members participated in the preparation of the Utah State Core Curriculum, and 15 teachers participated in the preparation and revision of the DESK standards. There is evidence that the development of the curriculum is based in part on established standards for student learning. The development of the curriculum does not fully take into account the need to support and challenge all students to excel in their learning. The DESK is provided in core subject areas, but the Visiting Team has not seen the articulation of curricula within departments and among focus groups.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

Efforts are being made to coordinate the curriculum across departments, but these efforts do not lead to a shared vision for student learning. There is limited use of research-based best instructional practices in implementing the curriculum within departments.

Quality Instructional Design:

- a) To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

From classroom observations, teacher interviews, and focus group results it is evident that the professional staff places an emphasis on academic learning experiences and has a desire to respond to individual student needs. Instructional time is valued by staff members and used to support student learning. Learning experiences are aligned with most of the instructional goals; however, during the Visiting Team's classroom observations, students consistently showed limited engagement in an instructional setting. Although there were classrooms where students were actively constructing knowledge, the Visiting Team observed an imbalance between teacher-directed instruction and students actively engaged in learning.

The Visiting Team observed teachers asking students many valuable questions regarding essential facts, but the teachers rarely required higher-level thinking through thought-provoking questions that would have students apply their learning in a meaningful way. Students felt that teachers had created a positive academic climate, yet reported a lack of ownership within their learning environment. These inconsistencies in school-collected data reveal that the relationship between teacher and student perceptions regarding active learning in the classroom requires reconsideration.

- b) To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?*

Classroom teachers discussed many methods for accommodating different learners, such as peer tutoring, SEOP conferences, and cooperating with special education and ESL teachers. The regular education teachers reported that they have a good collaborative relationship and good communication with special education teachers, while many special education teachers discussed communication barriers within collaborative groups. The Visiting Team observed that student issues were detected and resolved primarily by the Special Education Department. Also, while additional assistance was provided for students through established programs, there was no evidence of schoolwide modified instructional strategies (e.g., adapted texts, modeling, valuing multiple literacies).

The professional staff's desire to create an environment of acceptance for all learners was widespread. The collection of information that might be helpful in determining who those learners are and what their specific needs might be has not yet been emphasized or implemented. As a result, some teachers reported a disproportionate number of English Language Learners, special education students, or learners with special needs in their classrooms, while other teachers had limited opportunities to interact with those students.

- c) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*

The Visiting Team perceived that students receive adequate assistance to improve their learning. The school has implemented a peer tutoring program, and the Counseling Center supplies a list of tutors for each subject area. Both teachers and students have expressed a prevailing view that additional assistance is available to students seeking extra help. As part of an expired grant the school implemented a program for select struggling sophomores, which proved beneficial by helping them form a support network.

The Visiting Team observed that help is available for those students who actively seek it; however, those students who do not actively seek help are less likely to receive additional assistance. Further data collection and analysis would identify which students or groups of students require additional assistance, and help ensure that all students in need receive additional help on a consistent basis.

Quality Assessment Systems:

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or schoolwide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

The staff attempts to clearly state assessment expectations and performance standards on individual class disclosures. Most assessments, as designed by individual classroom teachers, are directly linked to specific instructional uses. In individual cases where the expectations of student learning are clearly defined, assessments of student learning are aligned with the essential knowledge and skills and performance standards. The quality assessment focus group recognized that “we can improve our communication with parents and students,” and “we can, as individuals, continue to improve in this area.”

The schoolwide expectations for student achievement and performance standards are not fully developed. Schoolwide assessments are limited to standardized, state, and district tests. The focus group found that interpretation of assessment results is not always made available for teachers to study and improve.

- b) *To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?*

Team observations and interviews found traditional assessments being used in most classrooms to cover the intended range of essential knowledge and skills. The selection of the method of assessing student learning is not consistently based on the type of learning to be assessed.

The focus group discussed the need for a greater variety of assessment tools. As an area for improvement, the focus group stated, “We want to improve teacher test and rubric writing skills.” As a result of the discussion, a survey of commonly used assessments was conducted in the fall of 2002. The staff received district inservice training on assessment tools. A second survey is to be done before the end of the school year to determine the extent of increased use of various assessment tools. Progress is being made to implement a wider variety of classroom assessments.

- c) *To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?*

Assessments seem to cover adequately the intended range of essential knowledge and skills to be assessed. Students are provided with some additional opportunities to demonstrate their learning beyond the initial or traditional assessment. The focus group reported “the need for more reassessments...to allow teachers to better determine methods of instruction and measure student learning.”

Most student learning assessments and grading practices are fair; however, some assessments or grading practices do not fully meet the standards of fairness. The focus group also felt the “use of a rubrics would help to eliminate bias and distortion in assessment results.”

Leadership for School Improvement:

- a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

The school’s leadership maintains a focus on instructional goals and outcomes. The depth of the school’s commitment to improving student learning is evident. The principal’s enthusiasm as a leader encourages and sustains his colleagues. The principal is progressive, morale is high, and stakeholders are proud of their school. Thus, a positive learning atmosphere, where teachers can teach and students can learn, has been created. Students and staff feel valued and important. Ongoing efforts are made by the principal to honor the work of students and staff.

The School Community Council has the potential to serve as a major resource for the school administration. The Visiting Team recommends that the Layton High School administration continue to encourage the members of this committee in their bid to improve the school climate.

- b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision-making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?*

The school has determined some of the resources, timelines, and responsibilities for implementing the action steps of the school improvement plan. The school could

better identify methods that can reach students who perform academically in the lowest third of the school.

The Visiting Team recommends that more be done to disaggregate data in order to clarify the school profile. This data could then be used to design effective educational programs for students.

- c) *To what extent does leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

There is evidence in the school's action plan that an ongoing monitoring of student achievement is in the developmental stages. The administration is committed to working with Davis School District to enlarge, disaggregate and analyze student data.

- d) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?*

There is a commendable effort by the school's leadership to communicate with the school community. This was noted via interviews with students, staff, and parents. Schoolwide policies and operational procedures are beginning to align with the school's beliefs and mission. Students' data results indicate the overall feeling of a safe environment.

The Visiting Team recommends the continuation of programs to address students' attendance and citizenship, even as the school administrators become more visible in the halls and continue their frequent classroom visitations.

- e) *To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts?*

The school goals, DRSLs, and school improvement program have been developed and implemented under the direction of the administration. The principal's leadership style allows his staff to be creative. Positive and productive working relationships have been established among students, teachers, support staff, and the administration.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

By developing the School Community Council, the administration has shown good faith in the ability and desire of the school community to take a strong role in

participating, collaborating, and sharing responsibilities in directing the school. The administration builds collaborative networks of support with community members and groups, youth-serving agencies, city leaders, and leaders of higher education and business. A strong atmosphere of collaboration is evident throughout the school community.

Community Building:

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

The Visiting Team found evidence to support the idea that the school has created a sense of community among the students, staff and faculty. Significant evidence of a positive and productive working relationship exists among all school personnel. Evidence was obtained in the Accreditation Report, as well from personal interviews by the Visiting Team. Other programs that were recognized as helping to foster community building are student recognition programs, a strong student government program, and an administrative team (which does not overextend its concerns into teacher, department or staff matters). It was also observed that the school is willing to address the concerns of all stakeholders and build positive relations and improved operations.

The Visiting Team would encourage the school to continue fostering community building by following their outlined action plan. This plan includes finding ways to increase integrated studies within classes at Layton High School. The other goal mentioned in the community building focus group report should be expanded to include improving communication among **all** departments, especially between the Special Education Department and the rest of the school. These are worthy goals that the focus group needs to integrate into the school's overall plan.

- b) *To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

There is significant evidence to indicate that the school engages parents as partners in the learning process. The school community is extended and collaborative networks established through SEOPs, a parent newsletter, the Community Council, the PTSA, student government, and booster organizations. The Community Council serves as a productive forum for the entire school and community for collaborating networks. The Visiting Team was impressed by the input provided by members of the Community Council.

The Visiting Team would encourage the school to continue extending the school community by following their outlined action plan. The focus group laid out an action plan to build stronger ties between middle schools and the high school. The

action plan also calls for more students to be integrated into the working world by doing internships, job shadowing, and summer co-op work programs.

Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

Layton High School has demonstrated strong support for professional development on both the school level and the district level. A recent 21st Century Grant afforded a rich three-year experience that introduced the faculty to a variety of best practices, including curriculum integration and mapping, brain research, and reading and writing across the curriculum. The feeling now of the faculty focus group on continuous learning is that more training is needed, along with the opportunity to follow up and apply these principles and practices in the classroom. The Visiting Team agrees. Valuable training has taken place; the faculty should now apply that training. The school should schedule further training and collegial activities to implement these practices in classrooms throughout the school. Further, specific activities and training should focus on the accreditation action plan and on the findings and recommendations of the focus groups.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

As evidenced by past and existing professional development activities, Layton High School's organizational system and culture are strongly supportive of school improvement and professional development. The school fosters an understanding of the self-analysis process that results in many faculty members being supportive and engaged in that process. The Visiting Team recommends continued support, aligned with the accreditation action plan and with the recommendations of the appropriate focus groups.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (NASCU) STANDARDS I-X

Standard I—Educational Program

This standard is met.

Standard II—Student Personnel Services

This standard is met.

Standard III–School Plant and Equipment

This standard is met.

Standard IV–Library Media Program

This standard is met.

Standard V–Records

This standard is met.

Standard VI–School Improvement (This is addressed in the self-study.)

This standard is met.

Standard VII–Preparation of Personnel

This standard is not met. As of October 15, 2002, as indicated in the annual report, two teachers were waiting for letters of authorization. Sixteen teachers lacked appropriate endorsements.

Standard VIII–Administration

This standard is met.

Standard IX–Teacher Load

This standard is not met. The annual report indicated that six teachers have class loads exceeding 210 students.

Standard X–Activities

This standard is met.

CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN

- a) *To what extent is the schoolwide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

The school needs to identify the “critical” areas for follow-up. The action plan seems to be too broad-based to be manageable and attainable.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and system-wide?*

There is a commitment to the self-improvement process. However, not all stakeholders seem to be aware of the process or goals.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the schoolwide action plan appear to be?*

The areas of focus need to be narrowed. The spectrum of work seems to be too broad to be effectively addressed. Critical areas of focus need to be identified and concentrated upon by all stakeholders.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends Layton High School on their exemplary self-study.
- The Visiting Team commends the school administration for providing leadership through the accreditation process. Parents, students, and teachers praised the administration for their commitment to the success of students.
- The Visiting Team commends Layton High School for their efforts with professional development, past and present, and their willingness to implement best practices.
- The Visiting Team commends Layton High School for having created a culture and climate conducive to a positive learning environment.
- The Visiting Team commends Layton High School for a strong applied technology program and for the solid working relationship between the administration and the Davis Applied Technology College. Multiple programs are encouraged and available to students. This is a credit to the Layton High School community.
- The Visiting Team commends Layton High for its strong working relationship with the Community Council.

Major Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends continuing professional development to ensure the consistent use of effective teaching methods that can be accommodated within the block schedule.
- The Visiting Team recommends enlarging, disaggregating, and analyzing current data regarding implementation of the school improvement plan.
- The Visiting Team recommends that focus, departmental, and interdepartmental collaborative groups continue to meet on a regular basis to plan curricula and assess the needs of individual students.